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The Common Cause

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[The N.U.W.S.S. does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles or in correspondence.

All MSS. and letters relating thereto should be addressed to the Editor, The Common Cause, *Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, W. 1. Telephone: Museum 2702.]*

Notes and News.

Opposing "Sex Antagonism."

When the causes of sex antagonism have been removed sex antagonism will cease to exist. This may sound trite, but the truth of even a truism is not always recognised. No political party has done more to promote sex equality and thereby to remove sex antagonism than the Labour Party. No women have done more to establish good comradeship between women and men than those women workers of every class who have united to demand the principle of a single instead of a dual scale of pay. But all is not accomplished yet; and it is surely only muddled thinking which leads some few otherwise intelligent person to express themselves as though sex antagonism were a spirit to be summoned or dismissed at the word of command. When the spirit of equity is injured the spirit of antagonism appears upon the scene. The antagonism is felt by the person who suffers from the inequity; and it is, therefore, as futile to tell women, when they are worse treated than men, that they must feel no sex antagonism as it would be to assure an underpaid labourer that he must have no ill-feeling towards an over-wealthy employer. True feeling of whatever nature is not blown away by talking. We are glad, therefore, that Miss Gertrude Tuckwell, on retiring from the presidentship of the National Federation of Women Workers, reminded some of the members who had been deprecating—rightly enough—"sex antagonism," that no hostility would be felt towards men by women who were equally well educated, equally well organised and equally well paid for their labour. Miss Tuckwell now, as on so many past occasions, has given women workers a splendid lead.

Forward for "Equal Pay"!

The principle of equal pay for equal work goes grandly forward. Not only has the Federation of Women Workers at last week's Manchester meeting protested against "the violation of the principle of equal wages for equal work in the exclusion of women from the war advances granted to men," and has cited a number of instances of the employment of women on men's work at lower wages; but the omnibus and tram women have won a substantial victory for the equal pay principle. They have won an award which provides that all women over eighteen who are doing a man's work are to receive the war advance of 25s. on the same terms as men. Further, when at any time the men's scale of pay is altered, the women's shall be altered in the same way. This is a great triumph for equity; but it could not have been won if the women had not stood by each other and been of one mind. The Government has now appointed a Committee to investigate the working of a principle which has gained so powerful a hold on the minds of women. The terms of reference to the Committee are that it shall "investigate and report as to the relations which should be maintained between the wages of women and men, having regard to the interests of both, as well as to the value of their work. The recommendations should have in view the necessity of output during the war, and the progress and well-being of industry in the future." It is to be quite a small committee of five persons:—a man for chairman, Mr. Justice Atkin; two women members, Dr. Janet Campbell (Medical Officer to the Board of Education), and Mrs. Sidney Webb; and two men, Sir Lynden Macassey, a member of the Government Labour Committee, and Sir W. W. Mackenzie, chairman of the Committee on Production, the body with which the women traffic workers have had their recent contest.

Education and £ s. d.

This is a critical year for education. Among Cambridge resident and non-resident members of the Senate the movement towards the admission of women to University membership is still proceeding. Some announcement will doubtless be made before long of the total number of signatures which have been received to the "pro" and "anti" memorials. In any case the outcome of this effort can be in no doubt. Very shortly both Oxford and Cambridge will be obliged to recognise their duties as national and not merely masculine universities; and if they come to this recognition voluntarily they may yet save their dignity. Already women university electors are within their gates, and the wishes of these women will have to be listened to by candidates for academic seats. It is not too soon for women in the educational world to be taking a firm stand on all the points which specially interest them. The teachers in particular have an opportunity which they should not let slip. In the absence of so many colleagues at the front, it rests with the women to hold high the banner of the profession. They must not let education be treated as the genteel Cinderella among employments. Bodies like the Association of Head Mistresses (which passed stalwart resolutions on the equal pay question and others last June) and the London Federation of Women Teachers will hardly be content with some of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on salaries of secondary school teachers in State-aided schools. The Committee appears after much thought to have arrived at the conclusion that the salaries of men and women ought to be "adequate" (whatever that word in war time may mean in figures), but that equality of salaries would be too dreadful to contemplate; since "equality of pay would in existing circumstances lead to one being underpaid and the other overpaid." The underpayment of teachers of both sexes has long been endured, and the over (or shall we say liberal) remuneration of just a few headmasters and house-masters has been accepted with philosophy. But the thought that women teachers in secondary schools might be "overpaid" is one from which the Committee recoils in horror.

We are Glad to Know

that Lord Buckmaster will introduce in the House of Lords a Bill for Divorce Reform. It is a subject of profound concern to all women; and our National Union insists that here, as in other affairs of life, the law should be even between the sexes. We are also glad that the Federation of Women Workers is not satisfied that women under thirty should be excluded from the Parliamentary Register, and demands equality of conditions for both sexes. We are also not sorry that the attention of a Government department, namely the War Office, has been called to the fact that women, too, sometimes have dependents. A question has been put whether a dependent husband or other relative of a member of the Q.M.A.A.C. should not receive a separation allowance. Need we say the answer has been "in the negative"?

OUR BARGAINING POWER.

THE General Election begins to come into sight. The political power of women at this election will be enormously greater than it has ever been before. Do not let us forget that fact. Let us take careful, dispassionate stock of the situation, remembering, moreover, that there is much to be done. It is no time for day-dreams, no season for the old pre-Suffrage cry that "everything will come of itself." Women who are politically minded, who are social reformers, who feel that they have a duty to other women and to the community, must plan, must act.

We have been already reminded—we shall hear it often again—that this must be an election on a "Win the War" appeal. Undoubtely it will be so. On the other side—a General Election can hardly be carried *nem. con.*—there will be some counter-cry (or cries) as yet unformulated. So be it.

Can women in these circumstances press Parliamentary candidates to support any of those great measures of social justice and equity for which our National Union stands?

Some persons answer this question with timidity and hesitation. In effect they say, "Those who are heart-and-soul on the 'Win the War' side dare not 'complicate' that principle with any other. Those who are in the opposition camp (or camps) will be at liberty to ask for what they fancy, since they will find themselves in the position of having 'greater freedom and less responsibility.'"

Is this timidity justified? Are women who believe the maintenance of achieved democratic reforms and the progress of democratic principles to be bound up with the triumph of the Allies and the English-speaking peoples—are such women justified in thinking that feminist causes ought (or even can) be omitted from the programme of the next Parliament? Surely not. There are women, no doubt, as there are men, who support their country's action in the war for other reasons than the one we have defined. There are women likewise who are feminists, and who see the history of events since July, 1914, not as the two successive British Governments have seen it. But we address ourselves now mainly to feminist women who have espoused the cause of the Allies from democratic conviction. These are women who can accomplish much if they put forward a case which is not over-vast, and, putting it forward, do so with determination.

It will be impossible to fight a General Election on a "Win the War" cry alone. Why? First because the democratic thinkers—the believers in the "equality formula"—who have taken the "Win the War" side have not taken that side accidentally or for reasons parted off from their other political convictions. Consequently—and were it solely to explain the general faith which is in them—they must inevitably in election speeches set forth their whole creed, of which they hold that the defeat of the Central Powers and the Turks is now an essential part. They could not speak to any purpose if they did not utter their whole thought. Their thought will take shape in such questions as this:—"Are we, a people with Parliamentary Government and a large measure of representation for both sexes, to bow the knee to nations far behind us in these respects?" It is easy to imagine the long series of questions in which such an one as this would appear. We do not argue the validity of such questions. We feel bound to point out that such questions will be put this autumn and in other places than these pages, and that they will be pressed home with eloquence and fervour.

Considerations of what are termed "practical politics" alone will force candidates, their spokesmen and spokeswomen, to speak of legislative measures which they regard as dependent on an Allied victory. The political home life of the nation has been held up in some directions and materially changed in others by the war. Arrears of work are waiting to be made good. The whole equilibrium of trade and of employment has been profoundly altered. New trades have been developed, old ones have been revived. The scale of wages, the proportion of women's pay to men's, the ratio of women skilled workers to men skilled workers—all these big factors in the nation's life have not been merely modified but revolutionised since the last General Election. Above all, permeating all, is the fact that for the first time we have a large women's electorate added to the increased electorate of men.

We have only to think of such points as those just enumerated to see that reforms desired by women are not merely likely to be mentioned from all platforms, but that they will force themselves to the front by their very momentum.

Yet we know the dangers of election oratory. We know the hedging speech, the full-mouthed phrase. Of these we have had many a past experience. How are we to get honest promises of help towards some of the reforms we really want? How are we to secure places for our items upon the Parliamentary agenda?

We must, as women, exercise our political power. It is a power which takes different forms. With some women it is the power of individual expression, with others it is the power of uniting women of like sympathies. But a power which is often more effective is that of co-operating with other people whose objects are rather different, and by giving help in one direction and receiving help in others making a party programme and a party organisation possible. It is this exchange of political services on a basis of general political accord that we term, with no disparaging meaning, a bargaining power. Many women with strong political sympathies of various kinds kept those sympathies in abeyance during the years when the House of Commons slighted the Suffrage cause. The help of those women speakers was more seriously felt than party leaders cared to admit. In the coming days when a numerous female electorate must be addressed this help will be indispensable. Already the various parties are offering flattering invitations to women to join them and to let anti-suffrage bygones be bygones. We would advise feminist women who wish to support the general programme of some party or group to accept the welcome now being offered them, always provided that the acceptance of such invitations follows the receipt of definite assurances that their party's programme will include some of the proposals which the Council of the N.U.W.S.S. has determined to push forward.

At the end of an article it is too late to discuss those items in detail. We shall often recur to them during the coming weeks. We would only at this moment point out that there are in the Council's programme demands which should appeal in varying degree to all the parties from, let us say, such questions as the rights of married women with regard to taxation, upwards and onwards to the establishment of the equal payment principle, the State provision for widows with dependent children, and the enfranchisement of women on the same terms as men.

One of our first and nearest duties is to ensure that women shall not merely be returned to Parliament but be able to take their seats. We have also an infinite amount of work yet to do in the regions of law, of action, of thought, and of the human heart before the "subjection of women" shall truly have become a slavery of the past. There is much to be done. The time is short. Let all women reformers use to the utmost of their capacity whatever political power they possess.

Conference of Women War Workers.

Paris; August, 1918.

By Ray Strachey.

On the initiative of the American Y.M.C.A., a great conference of women war workers of the allied nations, was held in Paris on August 20th and 21st. The meetings, which were attended by women in the uniforms of every country, gave a very striking evidence of the comradeship that comes of work for a common cause, and also of the varied and essential nature of the contributions that women make to the defence of their country. Nurses were there from every Allied nation; hospital workers, from every unit and detachment; doctors, ambulance drivers, V.A.Ds, and their French Canadian, and Belgian equivalents; workers among the refugees, the orphans, the mutilated, and the blind; workers in camps and recreation tents,

canteens, railways, and rest stations; munition workers from the factories of France, and typists, telephonists, and secretaries from the offices of the Government. The Conference was intended to deal with those aspects of war work, which will have a bearing upon the period of reconstruction, and in consequence time was not taken up with reports of what was being accomplished by women in different countries, nor with the long list of the tasks that women have been called upon to undertake since August, 1914.

The Conference opened with speeches from the American hostesses, and the first day was devoted to the discussion of some of the practical problems that the war would leave. The question of State regulation of vice, for example, could not but demand the attention of such a Conference, and it was considered from various aspects on the opening day.

In the evening a great banquet was held at which five hundred women assembled to do honour to the cause for which they all were working. It was made up of women only, and all the prominent women workers in Paris, both Frenchwomen and foreigners, were invited. The speeches dealt with America, Belgium, France, and England, and emphasised the unity and the determination of the women war workers in all these countries to stand by each other. The speakers were :— Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss (chair), Mdlle. La Comtesse Hélène Goblet d'Alviella (Belgium), Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton (England), Miss Loxwell (U.S.A.), and Madame Emile Boutroux (France).

A delegation was sent to the this Conference from England, consisting of the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton (Director, Women's Branch, Food Production Department, Board of Agriculture), the Duchess of Atholl, Dame Katharine Furse (Director W.R.N.S.), and Mrs. Oliver Strachey (N.U.W.S.S.). On the second day of the Conference this delegation spoke of the aims and hopes of British women for the future, and of the part the enfranchised women might hope to play in the development of a free country in a free world. This section was presided over by Mme. la Marquise de Gannay, and was the final business session of the Conference. In the afternoon the delegates were received by M. and Mme. Poincaré, and the same evening a great mass meeting of women was held in the Elysée Theatre at which over two thousand workers were assembled. The chair was taken by Lord Derby, the British Ambassador, and the speakers were M. Pichon and Mrs. Lyttelton. Messages of encouragement and appreciation were received from President Wilson, M. Clémenceau, and Mr. Lloyd George, and many tributes were paid to the value of the work of women. Mrs. Lyttelton, however, struck the note that the meeting was waiting to hear when she said that it was not praise or congratulations that women wanted, but the opportunity to serve their countries and their country's Allies, and that they were looking for a future in which they could go forward together with mutual understanding and mutual trust.

During this meeting Lord Derby called a roll of the organizations represented, and, as the names were read, the women from each *work* rose and remained standing until the whole audience was on its feet, and then, with the choir and the orchestra, they sang the songs of liberty.

During the days of the Conference the English delegates were taken to see much of the interesting war work now being carried on in Paris. Not only is the work for the French Army centred there, but to Paris come the refugees from the devastated districts. In Paris, also, much hospital work, as well as all the machinery of the French Government, is concentrated. In addition, there is the vast influx of the American armies; and the Portuguese armies have their headquarters in Paris also. The Paris of to-day is most emphatically a cosmopolitan city. English papers are sold almost as freely as French papers in the streets, and the paper boys cry " paiper " even as they do in the streets of London.

Over the whole week of the Conference, and in spite of the attempted raids from the air, there was spread a great cheerfulness due to the news from the Front. And men and women in the streets of Paris smiled at each other, the soldiers in the hospitals smiled, and the sun smiled over it all with the heat of August.

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Past and Future.

Five Tales. By John Galsworthy. (Heinemann. 6s net.)
The New Moon: a Romance of Reconstruction. By Oliver Onions. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s. net.)

" The best method, I believe," said Mary Wollstonecroft, " that can be adopted to correct a fondness for novels is to ridicule them." What a distance have we travelled since it was possible to regard the novel as a means of frivolity or a butt of ridicule! Now, it is an instrument of social reform: we take it as seriously as we are said to take all our pleasures. The novelist need not always know how to construct a novel, but he must know how to reconstruct a universe. For the most part this is to the good. All art must be founded on *some* theory of life, and nothing is gained by holding the theory that the function of life is to be escaped from, any more than by holding the theory that the function of marriage is divorce. Distraction is all very well at times, but it is not an end in itself: and, though it would be merely pedantic to deny the elegant flippancies which amuse, we surely are right in finding time for the books which do something more than kill time. Only, there is a justifiable and an unjustifiable way of tackling fact in fiction. If the lesson to be taught protrudes itself as a lesson, we wonder why it should bother itself with the trappings of a story. It is when the inspiring cause has become one with its expression, so that the book's lesson is life's lesson, that we get literature. It used to be said of Mr. Galsworthy's " Strife " that it showed a deadlock, not a way out. That would be an adverse criticism if a way out were what we had a right to expect. One could finish " Strife " without coming to a conclusion about the claims of the two opposing forces, Capital and Labour: but one could not finish " Strife " without knowing more about Capital and Labour, because one could not finish it without knowing more about life, of which Capital and Labour are one aspect. Mr. Galsworthy in that play was an artist, and art after all is only second nature. Well, Mr. Galsworthy has to be judged by his own high standard. His " Five Tales," by that standard, are not wholly, but still considerably, successful. He has written (whether here or elsewhere) little about the war; yet, I think, there can be no doubt that the war has given an impetus to the kind of serious and social art for which he stood in pre-war days. Now, more than ever, we are compelled to " look before and after." Often nothing seems real except the war. " Our lives before the war," said a wise friend to me, " are real as our childhood is real." Values and perspectives are altered. What will seem real to such part of the world as survives the war? Somehow or other, unless the world is to go mad (and we must not forget how near to universal madness whole societies have, in historical fact, been reduced in periods of prolonged war or violent revolution), a synthesis has got to be attained, and all these violently shifting perspectives and valuations have got to be proportioned to the eternal truths. We cannot but feel ourselves adjured by circumstance, as King Charles (if I remember right) was adjured in Browning's play:

> " Pause here upon this strip of time
> Allotted you out of eternity."

As we so pause, " looking before and after," our main temptations—at least in fiction—are to sentimentalise the past and to indulge in vague postulates about the future. What we ought, for sanity, to do is to attempt a difficult, an all but impossible, task: to force upon our shrinking minds the realisation that this over-brooding reality of war is born of the same forces as made the unrealisable realities of what we called peace, of the same forces as will be at work afterwards, "reconstructing" more busily and more powerfully than a thousand committees. We need not ask of books that they should be " about " the war: if they are about life, they will be about the war, which, like that other war of industry, is a part of life and of death. We must perforce bring past and future to the test of the present.

These five new stories of Mr. Galsworthy's are very unequal, but they vary in degrees of goodness rather than from good to bad. Also, their merits vary with their subjects: and thus we get as it were a commentary on Mr. Galsworthy's range of powers, an implied estimate of what he can do best and what he does less well. The first story is the most vivid, the most satisfactory. Its theme in other hands might have seemed crude: Mr. Galsworthy has the art of insisting that the crudity is in the incidents of actual life as partially understood by the too-easy apprehension, and disappears with the increase of understanding. He deals with ambition, suspicion, greed, drink and murder: he contrasts boldly the types of successful

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and unsuccessful, dominant and feckless, hard and gentle; and in his picture of the "good" prostitute, the girl whose essential sweetness of disposition is untouched by the hideous courses into which she has been forced, he escapes (as throughout his work he too rarely escapes) from the conception of sexual love as a mainly animal instinct. In the second story we get a picture of a militant but kindly overbearingness, a full-blooded well-fed force, untroubled by nerves or conscience, fighting to the last against the gathering powers of extreme age and social discredit: in the third, a contrast is attempted between the lyric beauty of youth's first passion and the austerer charms of a love fortified by respectability: in the fourth, the twelve secure members of a jury sit in judgment on a frightened and tormented soldier who has attempted suicide; and in the fifth, an old man in his last days, days of frailty and uncertainty, reaches back for contact with youth and loveliness, and half enjoys an "Indian Summer." In other words, the first and fourth stories are successful, the rest, though dignified and interesting, are not. For the noble indignation against a maddeningly unjust world is the impulse that most often carries Mr. Galsworthy to artistic adequacy—or (one must vary the metaphor indefinitely to express this) it is not his only string, but it is his surest. It gives him relief from the artist's bane of self-consciousness. It is the thing he utters with the greatest clearness, certainty, and ardour. Here he has a force of satire which, pausing on the brink of savagery, contents itself with the dignity of wit: he can command pathos, and suspense, and terror. The force of this protest was felt before the war: it can throw more light for us on conditions after the war than any amount of pseudo-scientific or semi-scientific speculation. For the old injustices will be abroad. Their breeding-place is the heart of man: society is their nursery. Mr. Galsworthy has been called by hostile critics "futile"; and as a social reformer he perhaps is so. But nobody is futile who can write a good book. We have, willy-nilly, to put our foot forward into the dark uncertainty of the future, and the fire of honest indignation is no bad lamp for that adventure. To make us understand what does happen is to make us understand what may happen; and the best prophets are often those who do not prophesy.

Where Mr. Galsworthy fails is in the pure poetry of prose, in lyrical abandonment and rapture. His story of "The Apple Tree" is meant to intoxicate us with the ardour of spring and young love no less than to shock us by the ironic contrast of "respectable" marriage. The irony is excellent, but the contrast does not quite "come off." The rapture, the ardour, is not there. One finds oneself thinking, not of apple-blossom, but of Meredith. Not that Mr. Galsworthy is at all like Meredith—that is the difficulty. What one thinks is: "It needs Meredith for this skill." And yet, when all is said, "The Apple-Tree" is a fine story. Better Mr. Galsworthy's failures than the successes of some who are counted most sucessful!

Mr. Onions is of the prophets who prophesy. He a little disarms criticism by the frankness and modesty of his preface. He acknowledges obligation not merely to More's "Utopia," from which he takes his guiding quotations, but to "many living men"—from whom, he says, "any thought the book may contain derives." And he adds: "The purpose of the book itself is, primarily, neither to amuse nor instruct. It is, rather, to divert, distract, and suggest." He betters his instruction by occasionally amusing, and certainly he distracts. But also he bewilders. He is, of course, a very very clever man. I do not refer to the great — and, in my poor opinion, greatly underestimated—value of his best novels, such as "In Accordance with the Evidence": for such work I should not use so small a word as "clever." I mean rather than even in "The New Moon," which I reckon one of his failures, he shows extraordinary knowledge (or so it seems to the lay mind) of many various things. He would appear to be an expert agriculturist, engineer and organiser: he appears so to me, but then, I am no agriculturist, engineer or organiser. He would not appear quite so definitely to be an expert politician or economist. He is amazingly facile and complete over the *details* of his post-war world: where he is vague is in the general scheme. For instance, in the post-war England of which he writes, "It was inconceivable that . . . a man should be allowed to do that which was right in his own eyes without further reference to his fellows." So far, so good; but that could be true, in the sense in which Mr. Onions applies it to the organisation of industry, only in a tightly "screwed-up" system of socialism. Yet Mr. Onions allows our old friend the profiteer to continue making the landscape hideous. This seems inconsistent. I do not like Mr. Onions's imaginary world: I do not even know whether he likes it himself. He shows us democracy nominally complete, but reduced to a farce by a cynical bureaucracy. But if he means his picture as a satire, or an awful warning of what

we *may* come to, why does he liken it to More's "Utopia"? And his story is bad art (to say nothing of the cheapness of some of his incidental sneers) because it is a bad story. There is no characterisation, there are no incidents. He has not allowed himself scope for his proper and indubitable gifts.

GERALD GOULD.

Correspondence.

WOMEN IN MINING DISTRICTS.

We have received the following interesting letter from a miner now at the front:—

Since receiving the copies of THE COMMON CAUSE and that delightful little book* by B. L. Hutchins, I have been reading every spare moment I had. And I can tell you they have been happy moments. This is what happened. I read the articles by Mrs. Fawcett first, then I sat up till 2 a.m. and read the book, and from that I began to think of the problem from the point of view of the miner.

I can understand how trade unionists in those trades where the women work in the same shop, doing practically the same work as the men, can so organise that a united stand may be made in preventing the waste of labour, &c. But when we come to the mining districts the matter takes on a different aspect altogether. Let me say right here that I am ever so eager to see something done to get the women in the mining districts organised. Only a very small number of them have been able to break away from the patriarchal system; many more would have done so I believe if they could have overcome certain prejudices of their parents and friends. Still, there it is. The majority of these women have had to remain at home and employ their time with domestic matters. And after the war what better will it be? It can hardly be expected that the miners' daughters, even granting that many of the prejudices which existed in pre-war days have been broken down, will seek employment in various other trades away from home. The women in other districts may object to them coming in.

The great thing, of course, is to get them interested in matters in their own districts. But how? That's the difficulty. I admit that a few women take an active interest in co-operation and successfully run co-operative guilds in the mining districts. But that is not like a body of women who earn their own living. The latter have innumerable laws, regulations, and conditions to work under which stir them to action. They gain a much broader outlook because they are compelled to think and formulate improvements in the conditions of labour. And of course they cannot do that without becoming interested either more or less in politics. Now in what way can we get the women of the mining districts employed so that they would be brought into closer touch with many of the important social needs?

One way has presented itself to me, and that is: get them to agitate for baths at the mine heads. As you know, this is a matter of great importance, not only to the women but to the men also, which has been severely neglected. The truth is, I believe, that the mine heads are without baths because the miners themselves have not demanded the installation. But in that, as in many other things, the women have not had a voice, nor have they had the matter fully laid before them.

Let me say in passing that, whilst many things happen within sound of the guns, there is one on this particular point I would like to mention: scores of French miners have splendidly continued to work in the mines here, even though they were within reach of the guns, and they have also continued to keep the bath houses open at the mine head. Often have I been asked by men why we could not have such places in England, where we could leave all the dirt behind instead of taking it into our own homes. If we could get the women in the mining districts to take this matter up, and it was successful, the benefits which would accrue from it would probably lead them to ask if there wasn't something else which needed their attention. Being a miner I long for our women to take a more active interest in the important social needs. I am convinced that many matters will remain unsolved until we have the women of our country working hand in hand with us for amelioration.

H. FLOYD.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING.

MADAM,—At the present time there is a general desire among all sections of the community to improve housing conditions in the country, and the Ministry of Reconstruction is giving special attention to the subject.

* *The Girl in Industry*. By D. J. Collier; preface by B. L. Hutchins. (G. Bell and Son. 9d. net.)

Who can say no— when Tommy asks for food?

He has done the fighting
He has risked the dying
And now he will starve
Unless we keep him alive

IT is not a case of extra comforts, but of sheer necessaries, which he can only get if we who are safe—thanks to his courage—deny ourselves on his behalf.

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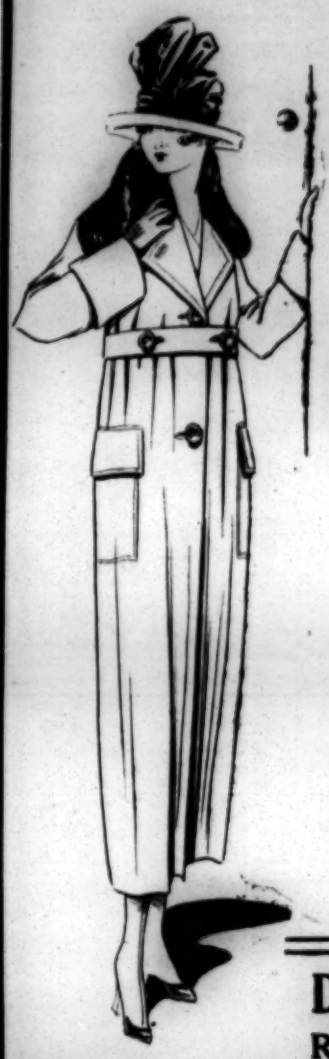

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On August 6th, the president of the Local Government Board received a deputation of Members of Parliament who urged the necessity of adequate State aid for local authorities that undertook housing schemes, and for the need of additional powers to force those authorities that were negligent in the matter to take prompt action. In replying, Mr. Hayes Fisher sketched the outlines of a Bill that he would lay before the House of Commons after the recess.

In the event of any new Bill relating to housing being introduced, the Fabian Women's Group strongly urges all women to press for the amendment of Sections 14 and 15 of the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 relating to "Contracts by Landlord." It may not be generally known that the landlord is bound in certain conditions to let and maintain the dwelling in a fit state of repairs, provided no agreement of three years is made. In London this rule applies to houses of a rental of £40; in a borough or urban district with a population of 50,000 or upward, of £26; and in any other case of £16 per annum. The tenant is able to claim compensation from the landlord should he receive injuries through the house being in bad repair. It is, however, surprising to find that the tenant's family (wife or child) are not covered by the section. It is strange—to say the least—that the mother who spends the greater part of the day in the home and who suffers most from want of repairs should be deemed in legal phraseology "a stranger to the contract." Two cases have been brought to the notice of the Group in which efforts have been made to secure compensation for the tenant's family, but without success. In the first case the wife fell through the treads of a rotten staircase; and in the second, a daughter cleaning windows found the chair on which she was standing give way into a hole in the boards.

Public opinion has to be changed on this matter, and the law amended so as to cover all occupants of such houses, whether or not members of the tenant's family. Women electors must take care that when the new Housing Bill is before Parliament their local members are urged to see that this needed reform is included.

Lilian Dawson,
Secretary, Fabian Society Women's Group.

Reviews.

The Architectural Review for August contains an article on "The Woman Architect and Her Home," by Annabel Dott. The title suggests a wider scope than the article actually possesses; but it describes a charming house in Yorkshire designed by a woman; and the accompanying photographs of its exterior and interior show how restful well-proportioned and uncrowded rooms can be.

The Englishwoman. September. 1s.

Undoubtedly the most interesting article in this month's *Englishwoman* is Miss Rhoda Power's account of her journey through Russia, which is entitled "From Rostov to Murman." It is a straightforward, simple, enthralling narrative; it conveys to the reader exactly the things he wants to know—the details which tell so much. The writer, far from obtruding herself, as do so many *raconteurs*, keeps herself completely in the background—too completely for our taste; for instance, we long to know whether it was Miss Power herself who, at Novacherkask, was "surrounded and threatened with death," but, "by dint of teasing and a little 'swank,' . . . managed to reach the station."

Other articles in the magazine are "National Kitchens and National Health," by F. L. Turner; "The Unmarried Mother," by D. L. Adler; "A Central Clearing House for University Women's Work," by I. A. Dickson, and an extremely interesting story by Lennox Robinson. The *Englishwoman's* standard of poetry is much lower than its standard of prose articles.

Reports, Notices, etc.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN WORKERS.

At the biennial conference of the National Federation of Women Workers at Manchester, a resolution was unanimously carried demanding the immediate withdrawal of 40D D.O.R.A.

Other resolutions were passed in support of Equal Pay for Equal Work; Women M.P.'s; Trade Boards; Increased Old Age Pensions; A Ministry of Health; and the Raising of School age to sixteen, with adequate maintenance allowance.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
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Headquarter Notes.

Treasurer's Note.

As we must raise a considerable sum of money for our autumn work, it is hoped that the Committees of our Societies will meet very soon, and consider how they can help us, whether by a Jumble or a White Elephant Sale, or by a collection from their members, or by any method. Help we must have and soon from our Societies, and we are grateful to those Societies who have already sent or promised something, including since last week a cheque from Winchester, and a promise from Maidstone.

Please remember that our special work for equality can only be done by us, and for it we must have funds.

Permanent Fund and New Citizens' Fund.

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged ...	259	3	5
Miss Frances Jackson ...		2	6
Miss Emily E. Jones ...	1	0	0
Miss Pyper	1	1	0
Miss C. Robinson	1	0	0
Miss R. B. J. Lulham ...		5	0
Mrs. Robson		2	6
Mrs. Gough	1	1	0
Mrs. E. Dowson		2	6
Miss Elworthy	1	0	0
Mrs. George	1	0	0
The Misses C. & E. Cadbury ...	2	0	0
Mrs. E. M. Dickson ...		5	0
Mr. Cash	1	1	0
Miss Augusta M. Reid		2	6
Miss Fawcett	50	0	0
	£319	6	3

Contributions to the General Fund.

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged since November 1st, 1917 ...	3,177	0	5
Received from August 1st to 31st, 1918:—			
SUBSCRIPTIONS.			
Dr. Alice E. Sanderson Clow (2 years)		10	0
Mrs. Alfred Illingworth ...	2	0	0
Miss Florence Fidler		5	0
Dr. Elizabeth Courtauld ...	2	0	0
Miss B. A. Clough	25	0	0
Miss Emily A. Clayden		1	0
Mrs. Arnold Glover	2	2	0
Miss Fullagar		5	0
Miss G. L. Moorcraft		2	6
Miss Miriam Marston		1	0
Mrs. Arthur Gibson	2	2	0
Mrs. G. H. Lomas		1	0
Miss M. Eade		2	0
Miss A. Weber		1	0
The Hon. Lady Grey Egerton	5	0	0
Miss R. Hovey	50	0	0
Mrs. C. Cotterill		5	0
AFFILIATION FEES			
Redditch W.S.S.		6	6
Sidmouth W.S.S.	1	3	3
Winchester W.S.S.	1	0	0
DONATIONS.			
Wokingham W.S.S.	1	0	0
Redditch W.S.S.		5	0
Stowmarket W.S.S., Balance in hand		6	6
Portsmouth W.S.S., Balance in hand	5	17	6
N. & E. Essex W.S.S.	2	6	0
Leighton Buzzard W.S.S., Balance in hand	4	8	9
Southport W.S.S.	1	0	0
Miss Evelyn Atkinson		7	6
Petersfield W.S.S.	1	1	0
Mrs. Merttens	1	1	0
Winchester W.S.S.	2	0	0
Miss Lena Ashwell	1	1	0
Miss Helena Frank	5	0	0
Mrs. C. Cotterill		15	0
	£3,296	16	11

Literature Department.

THE WOMEN CITIZENS' DIARY for 1919 is now in the press. Last year the demand for leather diaries for Christmas and New Year gifts was considerably in excess of the supply; it has therefore been arranged to have a larger edition of these, for 1919; but those who do not wish to be disappointed are advised to place their orders as soon as possible both for these and the cloth diaries. Owing to the great uncertainty about a General Election, and the fact that the redistribution of seats would make lists of constituencies revised in August obsolete before the diary was in daily use, it has been decided to omit the List of Members of the House of Commons from the diary for this year. It is possible that a supplement might be issued later if the demand were sufficient. The Directory of Useful Addresses has again been re-classified and enlarged, the Programme of the N.U.W.S.S. has been added, the information as to electoral qualifications enlarged, the particulars as to Local Government history and qualifications being badly revised by the then Womens' Local Government Society. Societies are urged to do their best to increase the circulation of the Diary as a useful means of making our extended aims known. A special effort is being made to publish it in time for sale at early autumn meetings, but the shortage of labour make deliveries uncertain and as orders will be taken in rotation it is all important to send them quickly.

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